

Compte-Rendu¹

The Third World: A Comparative Analysis Regarding to State, Society and Economics Underpinnings

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Abstract

This study, through a comparative politics approach, scrutinizes the Third World section of Eric Hobsbawm's "The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991" and the Transition to Multipolarity: Non-Alignment and the Non-Aligned sections of Oral Sander's "Political History". Via the examples of both authors' use in explicating the Third World notion, the conceptual aspect of the subject is being put forth. Within this framework, rather than presenting the concept's objective representation, the similarities and differences of both approaches is being displayed under a historical foreshadowing.

Keywords: Non-Alignment, Development, Political Economy, Population Increase.

3. Dünya: Devlet, Toplum ve İktisat Temelinde Mukayeseli Bir Analiz

Öz

Bu çalışmada Eric Hobsbawm'ın "Kısa 20. Yüzyıl 1914-1991 Aşırılıklar Çağı" eserinde yer alan Üçüncü Dünya ve Oral Sander'in "Siyasi Tarih" eserinde yer alan Çok Merkezliliğe Geçiş: Bağlantısızlık ve Bağlantısızlar, Latin Amerika bölümleri karşılaştırmalı bir analiz ile ele alınmıştır. Her iki yazarın Üçüncü Dünya kavramını açıklamakta kullandığı örnekler üzerinden konunun kavramsal yönü ön plana çıkartılmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu yönüyle kavramın nesnel bir ifadesinin sunulması yerine, tarihsel izlekler içerisinde her iki yaklaşımda ayrılan ve benzeşen yönleri ön plana çıkartılmaya çalışılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Bağlantısızlık, Kalkınma, Ekonomi Politik, Nüfus Artışı.

The relation between International Relations and Political History puts forth the causality aspect of the discipline. Within this outline, the developments within International Relations, apart from its current status, should be analyzed additionally through its historical processes and future projections. The main reference point for this causality process is the levels of analysis within International Relations discipline. It is possible to state that these levels of analyses are individual analysis, state analysis, and international system analysis.² When

¹ Comparative Political Analysis Methodology of École de Française.

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² Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and David A. Welch, "Küresel Çatışmayı ve İşbirliğini Anlamak", İstanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 2010, p.70.

observed from this perspective, it is possible to evaluate the Third World Approach via the Waltzian system level of analysis.

The explanatory approaches of Hobsbawm and Sander concerning the Third World begins with an explication of the international conjecture. In Hobsbawm, the Third World, which is reached by a societal revolution and a subsequent cultural revolutionary process, displays causality ties within a historical methodology. Concerning the emergence of the Third World as a problematique however, both authors who mainly state on the population increase under the world of “relative integration”, makes reference to the affect of demographic advances on development problems.

Stating developed countries as the First World, the countries of the Socialist Bloc as the Second World, and the countries that stand out of these blocs as the Third World, both authors make tribute to the political economy of the international relations. From this aspect, political economy focuses on how the state and its political processes affect production and societal wealth distribution, and how political decisions affect the gains and costs of economic activities.³ Eventually, the Third World actually can be defined as a world that is composed of particular “underdeveloped” communities.⁴

The Third World, that puts forth the division of core-periphery separation under the political economy arena, in a theoretic sense, is part of Wallerstein’s “World System’s Theory”. This theory presents the mutual dependency approach.⁵ The main argument of the Dependency Theory is: as long as developmental activities contribute to the wealth accumulation of the core countries, it is doomed to fail for the Third World countries.

Conceptual Tools

This section displays the conceptual tools used by Hobsbawm and Sander concerning the abovementioned theoretical framework. The period with which both authors mention as the breaking point for explaining the Third World is the process that when the colonial societies start to gain independence. Hobsbawm, as an addition, also stipulate that the population increase is related with the developments in medical sciences. Sander on the other hand, claims that the stability of the international system was sustained with the European integration. According to Sander, the relations conducted in that continent causes the economic resources to be channeled into a single area, and thus, the injustice within the global income distribution becomes evident.

At the same time, Sander claims that the independence of Indian and Pakistan are parameters for the emergence of the Third World. Hobsbawm on the other hand, argues that together with independence, there should exist of population increase control mechanisms, and these implementations were mainly evident in India and China. Along with population, another key, which both authors use in

³ Robert Gilpin, “Uluslararası İlişkilerin Ekonomi Politigi”, Ankara: Kripto Yayınevi, 2013, p. 22.

⁴ Server Tanilli, “Uygurlik Tarihi”, İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Kitapları, 2013, p. 267.

⁵ Andrew Linklater, “Theories of International Relations”, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, p. 123.

explaining the Third World, is “development”. Arguing that there is no single recipe for sustaining development, both authors mention that development models vary across countries. In conjunction, Hobsbawm, arguing that while Brazil and Mexico witnessed 7% growth rates, they could not overcome bureaucratic and governmental mediocrity, which presents the relation between democratic development and society. Approaching to the Third World problems via a macro perspective, Hobsbawm refrains from a state based analysis, and mainly prefers classifications such as Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Sander, meanwhile, elaborates on the states of the abovementioned continents with more depth.

Another concept which Sander uses apart from Hobsbawm in explicating on the Third World is “Geography”. Contrary to Hobsbawm who defines Africa as Sub Saharan and North Africa, Sander, who evaluates that geographical definitions are one of the most important conceptual tools, conceptualizes Africa as North, Central, and Southern Africa. Sander, who takes Africa’s position within the Third World concept as related with independence, also gives reference to Hobsbawm’s “Black Market” concept existing in these countries. Arguing Sudan’s and Ghana’s failed development journey with the words “Poverty, Corruption, and Deprivation”, Hobsbawm mentions the existence of a chronic instability in these countries. In this manner, the other concept with which Sander and Hobsbawm use in defining the Third World is “Stability” and/or “Instability”. Another phenomenon attached with the Third World and also causing instability is “Military Administrations”. The Latin American states, which make up the majority of Hobsbawm’s analysis, are the identity reflections of these kinds of administrations.

In contrast to Hobsbawm who evaluates Latin America via an identity basis, Sander relates the development problem of these countries to US interventions. Apart from Sander who puts forth the Non-Aligned Movement as nationalism and its relation with modernization in the 1950-1990 period, Hobsbawm, explicates the Non-Aligned Movement with the changes within the rural and urban communities of the members of this movement, and attempts to elucidate it through a land reform axis. Sander, who also touches upon the Middle Eastern development processes, explains the rise of nationalism in Egypt with the country attaining sovereignty over land and tools of production.

Nevertheless, it is seen that Hobsbawm, contra to Sander, in explaining the Third World, emphasizes the relation between tools of production and societal development and through this aspect, emphasizes the concept in a more political economy axis.

Conclusion

The Third World as a concept, even though has lost its actuality within the current International Relations axis, sustains its affects due to the meaning it still possess. The clashes those are ongoing in the countries that Hobsbawm defines as successor regimes in Third World countries, is now occurring between the old secular leaders and new Islamic democrats. If it is looked from this perspective, instability is still continuing with its context changed.

Even now the states that fail to achieve economic wealth due to lack of investment, continue to witness political independence problems. Its reflection on the economic sector is economic stagnation, and inflation, that is the sudden increase of the status of the general prices. When looked at the countries which were former Third World states such as Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Nepal, Sudan, and Zimbabwe, it can be seen that these countries are behind the 1960s standards.⁶

⁶ Daron Acemoğlu and James A. Robinson, “Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty”, London: Profile Books, 2013, s. 373.

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